123. Reduction of kuttikanom on non-royal trees to the rates which obtained before 1079 in the case of bona fide applicants for timber for house-building.

Mr. Ousep Kuriya Aippu stated that applicants for timber for purposes of house-building should be treated on a different standpoint from other applicants for timber, and hence suggested that non-royal trees might be given to them at the old rates which were far more favorable than the present ones.

Reply.—The value of timber has risen during the last twenty years and applicants for Government timber should not expect to get it below its market value, whether they are merchants or private individuals.

124. Desirability of giving some facilities for the purchase of teak timber.

Mr. K. Krishnan Pandalay, B. A., B. L. (Quilon) suggested that some arrangements might be made whereby teak timber could be kept in depôts from which people could take them at any price fixed by Government.

Mr. R. Vasudevan Pillai (Kartigapalli) also spoke in support.

Mr. S. Krishna Pillai (Tiruvallah) remarked that up to 1076 people had been allowed to cut timber from forests on the permit system. Government had also their own departmental depôts which together with private agencies more or less adequately met the demands of the public. But after that year, Government instead of encouraging private enterprise introduced a system of departmental felling of trees and, limiting the depots to a very small number, entered into an agreement with outside companies for the export of timber on the monopoly system. This resulted alike in loss to Government and inconvenience to the people. With the advance of civilization in the country and the growing expansion of the Public Works Department, the demands for royal timber had become quite incommensurate with the limited supply now available in Government depôts. There were only four land depôts and five water depôts, and it must be confessed that these were hardly enough. All the good timber remaining in them after meeting the requirements of Government were allowed to be removed by foreign merchants on the monopoly system, while the natives had to rest satisfied with rotten and useless timber. The member therefore desired that Government might give this question the earnest consideration it deserved and devise

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

measures for removing the evils complained of.

Reply.—The contract seems to have been given to outside companies owing to the want of sufficient demand here. Government regret that, until the expiry of the present contract which lasts for five years more, they are unable to do anything in the matter, so far as the water depots included in this contract are concerned. The other depots are, of course, open to the general public. The suggestions made by the last speaker will be considered when the time for it comes.

125. Permission to the ryots to take from the forests, free of charge, manure leaves and timber required for making agricultural implements.

Mr. M. Madhavan Tampi (*Kalkulam*) observed that this was one of the subjects brought up at the last session of the Assembly when it was prayed that people might be either permitted to cut trees for this purpose free of charge or take the requisite timber from Sirkar depôts on payment of actual expense. Permission should also be given for gathering manure leaves *gratis*. The member understood that orders had been recently issued for setting apart some tracts from which manure leaves could be freely collected, but wished that the public might be informed as to what these tracts were.

Reply.—No general provision can be made, but wherever necessary and feasible, Government will consider the desirability of reducing the number of reserved trees or moving back the boundaries of reserves for the benefit of the agricultural population in particular localities.

IV. Communications.

126. Close scrutiny of the Public Works Department estimates.

Mr. K. S. Shanmukham Pillai (*Agricultural Improvement Association, South Travancore*) remarked that the present scrutiny by Government of estimates submitted by the Public Works Department was not sufficient.

Reply.—In professional matters, it is neither seemly nor desirable to interfere with such estimates which have passed through several professional hands under the control of the responsible head of the department. Where, however, the scheme or estimate appears

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly